

Are you truly ready to make an informed, reasonable, and heartfelt decision? Look at each candidate on your college list from these four angles.

An Informed Decision

An informed decision means you have all the facts. If you are missing some detail or other information, fill in the gaps. If the information you need isn't available in the publications you have, online, or from other sources, call the appropriate department at the college. Most important, visit the college if you can.

A Reasonable Decision

A reasonable decision means you have considered your chances of acceptance at the colleges you're most interested in. You've researched costs and know you have a good chance of being able to afford it. You are fairly confident of succeeding at each college personally and academically. Review each school's admissions requirements and make sure your qualifications match what the school is looking for.

A Heartfelt Decision

A heartfelt decision means you aren't basing your choices solely on measurable criteria. It means you're also going with your intuition and instincts—that you're following your gut. You should feel good about each campus and the people there. Each school should fit your personality and challenge you in just the right ways.

The Right Decision

The right decision means you are sure you would be happy attending any college on your list.

- Go ahead and pick two or three "dream" colleges, as long as you think you might have any chance of getting in.
- Then choose two or three more realistic colleges, still close to what you want, but not as selective as the dream schools.
- Finally, pick two or three "safe" choices—colleges you think you'll like and that you know will admit you.

Once you've made your final decisions, go ahead and complete your applications. Concentrate on your senior year classes, and wait for news from admission offices with a minimum of stress. If you've carefully considered each college on your list, you can rest assured that no matter what, you will be attending the right college for you.